(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Deficit in oil pool account

598. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the trends in oil pool deficit during the last three years;

(b) whether the deficit is on the increase; and

(c) if so, in what manner Government propose to reduce the oil pool deficit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) The cumulative deficit in the oil pool account for the period 1998-99 to 2000-2001 was as follows:

(Rs. Crores)

Year	Cumulative deficit
1998-99	3,408
1999-2000	6,256
2000-2001	12,594

(c) The cumulative outstandings of the oil companies against the oil pool account will be liquidated by issuing oil bonds to the concerned companies.

Difference over subsidy on LPG

599. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal for removing or reducing subsidy from LPG and kerosene;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether there is a difference of opinion with the Ministry of Finance; and

(d) if so, what are the points of difference between the two?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) As a result of the dismantling of the Administered Pricing Mechanism in the petroleum sector effective 1st April 2002, it has been decided to phase out the subsidy on PDS kerosene and domestic LPG in the next three to five years.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Allotment of LPG agencies and petrol pumps

†600. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of LPG and Petrol Pump agencies allotted in various States of the country during the last three years district-wise; and

(b) the targets fixed for the fresh allotment of LPG agencies and petrol pumps in various States of the country during 2001-2002?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies have allotted 1018 LPG distributorships and 915 Retail Outlets in various States of the country during the last three years.

(b) Allotment of LPG agencies and Retail Outlets is a continuous process and it is not possible to indicate a fixed target for the fresh allotment of LPG agencies and Retail Outlets during a particular year.

Guidelines on selection of dealers

601. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of retail outlets for petroleum products in the country as on date, State-wise;

(b) whether Government have introduced a revised set of guidelines for selection of such dealers;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.